

Orientation to the North Carolina HPO Survey Program

For surveyors new to the North Carolina survey program, HPO Survey Branch staff provide in-house orientation and training, plus a site visit to the survey area, early in the planning phase. Orientation will address such topics as usage of the HPO's survey database, the HPO digital photography policy, mapping method to be used (paper or digital, or a combination), architectural patterns common in the survey area, and other topics as needed.

For each survey project, whether the surveyor is new to the program or experienced, the surveyor meets with HPO staff to assess the project schedule, budget, and arrangements; to determine appropriate mapping methods; to establish billing procedures for any photography processing by the HPO that may be desired by the surveyor; to update information on procedures for obtaining materials; and to obtain a block of survey site numbers for the survey project. *Obtaining the block of survey site numbers is critical*, for without it you cannot complete your survey forms or label your survey photo files and proof sheets, tasks that cannot be put off to the end of the project but must be accomplished as you proceed. For surveyors already experienced in the North Carolina survey program, other appropriate consultation in the field and in-house will be agreed upon with HPO staff.

The HPO makes photographic services available for orders related to HPO activities. All work is done automatically in a fashion to meet HPO survey standards and for statewide survey projects billing is at in-house rates. With the use of digital photography, the printing of enlarged proofs for the survey files is usually done by the consultant on his/her personal printer; sometimes the consultant prefers to provide the survey photo files on a disk for the HPO photo lab to do the printing. In the event the latter approach may be desired, or if the surveyor is using black and white film photography, at the beginning of a project the consultant must arrange with the Survey and Planning Branch's File and Photography Clerk to complete a billing form. If the local sponsor of the project wants a duplicate set of enlarged proofs, this must be established at the beginning of the project.

The surveyor should make an appointment with the HPO staff photographer to discuss photography techniques, and a second appointment for a field consultation with the photographer to ensure the highest quality photography possible during fieldwork.

The HPO staff person overseeing the project will arrange a meeting with the HPO's GIS coordinator to discuss the appropriate approach to project mapping. The GIS coordinator will have become familiar with the level of development of the local GIS, if any, and have determined the type of GIS data that the surveyor must collect on each property and the method of collection. Paper USGS maps certainly will be used in the initial, planning phase of the survey and it is likely that the final maps submitted at the conclusion of the project will consist of a clean, neatly labeled set of paper USGS maps. If there is a highly developed local GIS in place, however, a final set of paper USGS maps may not be required.

The orientation also includes consultation with Archives and History research staff for advice on research strategies and sources.

Early in the planning phase, the surveyor must examine existing survey files in Raleigh to determine what has already been surveyed and the quality and completeness of any existing survey files. This initial step is also essential in becoming acquainted with the architectural and historical patterns in the survey area. For properties in the National Register, the same is true. The surveyor needs to